

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CAPE T 00087 052211Z

70

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 IO-14 COME-00 OMB-01 NIC-01

AID-20 DRC-01 /159 W

----- 071936

R 051600Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3734

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LORENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0087

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SF

SUBJECT: GENERAL ELECTION SET FOR APRIL: BACKGROUND

AND COMMENT

REF: CAPE TOWN 0080 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: NATIONAL PARTY WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY WIN EASY

VICTORY IN APRIL GENERAL ELECTION.ALTHOUGH THERE WILL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CAPE T 00087 052211Z

BE NO CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT, POST-ELECTION PERIOD COULD BE

ONE OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA. STRAINS WITHIN
OPPOSITION UNITED PARTY COULD END IN A SPLIT. POLITICAL
REALIGNMENT, ESPECIALLY OF LIBERAL ELEMENTS IN SA, POSSIBLE.
BUT OF MORE SIGNIFICANCE WILL BE WHETHER, AS SOME PREDICT,
VORSTER GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE IMPORTANT NEW INITIATIVES IN
RACE RELATIONS, WHILE AT SAME TIME CONTINUING TO SUPPRESS
CERTAIN OF ITS ACTIVIST OPPONENTS. END SUMMARY

1. DURING HIS FEBRUARY 4 RESPONSE IN PARLIAMENT TO NO-
CONFIDENCE MOTION BY LEADER OF OPPOSITION SIR DE VILLIERS
GRAAFF, PRIME MINISTER VORSTER ANNOUNCED THAT GENERAL
ELECTION WILL BE HELD APRIL 24 (REFTEL).

2. PRESIDENT FOUCHE'S ADDRESS AT OPENING OF PARLIAMENT
(CAPE TOWN 0077, NOTAL) AND SPEECHES BY LEADER OF OPPOSITION
AND PRIME MINISTER DURING FIRST DAY OF NO-CONFIDENCE DEBATE
HAVE INDICATED PROBABLE LINE OF ATTACK THE TWO MAJOR
POLITICAL PARTIES WILL DIRECT AT EACH OTHER. OPPOSITION
UNITED PARTY (UP) WILL TAKE POSITION THAT RULING NATIONAL
PARTY'S DOMESTIC POLICIES HAVE MADE SOUTH AFRICA MORE
ISOLATED FROM REST OF WORLD AND MORE VULNERABLE THAN EVER
BEFORE. SAG POLICIES, IT WILL BE CHARGED, HAVE ALSO CON-
TRIBUTED TO ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY AND INFLATION, WHICH
JEOPARDIZE ECONOMIC WELFARE OF WHITES. NATIONAL PARTY
(NP) WILL POINT TO WHAT IT HAS ACCOMPLISHED FOR WHITE
ELECTORATE, DEFEND APARTHEID AS ONLY POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO
RACE PROBLEM, ATTACK UP'S FEDERAL PLAN, INSIST THAT
SCHISMATIC UP UNFIT TO GOVERN, AND REPRESENT ITSELF AS MOST
ABLE DEFENDER OF WHITE SOUTH AFRICA IN THESE TROUBLED TIMES.

3. ELECTION ITSELF OF SOME INTEREST. OUT OF IT WILL COME
SOME NEW FACES IN PARLIAMENT, WHICH PERHAPS WILL HAVE
SLIGHTLY MORE MODERN, MORE MODERATE OUTLOOK. HOWEVER,
THERE WILL BE NO BASIC CHANGE IN WHO WIELDS POLITICAL
POWER IN SOUTH AFRICA. NATIONAL PARTY, AS WE HAVE REPORTED
PREVIOUSLY, FULLY EXPECTED TO WIN HANDILY. IN LIGHT OF
PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION, WHICH UNLIKELY UNDERGO MUCH
TRANSFORMATION BEFORE ELECTION, NP SHOULD MAINTAIN OR EVEN
INCREASE THE MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY IT NOW COMMANDS
IN PARLIAMENT. THUS, NP GOVERNMENT WILL RETAIN VIRTUALLY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CAPE T 00087 052211Z

UNLIMITED POWER TO LEGISLATE AS IT DESIRES.

4. WHAT IS OF IMPORTANCE, THEN, IS NOT ELECTION RETURNS
BUT WHAT FOLLOWS. ALREADY SPECULATION IS GROWING THAT
AFTER UP SUFFERS ITS SEVENTH CONSECUTIVE GENERAL ELECTION
DEFEAT SINCE 1948, IT WILL BE RESHAPED. IF, AS MANY
EXPECT, GRAAFF STEPS DOWN, LIBERALS AND CONSERVATIVES IN
UP WILL VIE FOR CONTROL OF PARTY. IT POSSIBLE THAT,

BECAUSE OF APPARENTLY IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ITS OPPOSING FACTIONS, UP COULD FALL APART AND CEASE TO EXIST IN ITS PRESENT FORM. SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE MAJOR REALIGNMENT OF WHITE POLITICAL STRUCTURE INVOLVING ESPECIALLY A COALESCENCE OF VERLIGTE (LIBERAL) ELEMENTS IS INEVITABLE.

5. BE THAT AS IT MAY, ONE THING IS CERTAIN: NATIONAL PARTY WILL CONTINUE TO GOVERN AND FORCES WITHIN IT AND WITHIN AFRIKANERDOM WILL BE VITAL FACTOR IN, THOUGH BY NO MEANS SOLE DETERMINANT OF, FUTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA. IN MAKING THE DECISIONS AND ENACTING THE LAWS NP WILL BE, HOWEVER UNWILLINGLY, MORE NOW THAN IN MANY YEARS INFLUENCED NOT ONLY BY PRESENCE BUT ALSO BY ACTIONS AND INCHOATE POWER OF BLACK PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY. NEXT YEAR OR SO SHOULD MORE CLEARLY DEFINE EXTENT TO WHICH NP IS WILLING TO BE RESPONSIVE TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL NEEDS OF SOUTH AFRICAN BLACKS.

6. AS FOR POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION WITH BLACKS, ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN GROWING AGREEMENT AMONG WHITE LIBERALS AND AMONG SOME BLACKS THAT SOME SORT OF FEDERAL OR CONFEDERAL ARRANGEMENT IS KEY TO A PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S RACE PROBLEM, NP NOW ON RECORD AS BEING FIRMLY OPPOSED TO IDEA. DURING HIS SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT FEBRUARY 4 (DETAILS BY AIRGRAM), VORSTER STATED THAT POLITICAL FEDERATION WOULD MEAN DEVOLUTION OF PORTION ON WHITE SOVEREIGNTY AND THAT HE, THEREFORE, REJECTED IT. BEFORE ANY KIND OF FEDERATION COULD BE CONSIDERED, SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE CARRIED TO A POINT WHERE BLACK NATIONS (BUT DEFINITELY NOT ONE UNITED BLACK NATION) WERE INDEPENDENT. THEN AN ECONOMIC BLOC OF SEPARATE, INDEPENDENT STATES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA COULD BE FORMED.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 CAPE T 00087 052211Z

7. DESPITE VORSTER'S CATEGORICAL REJECTION OF ANY SHARING OF POLITICAL POWER, IT IS TRUE THAT FORCES FOR CHANGE, ESPECIALLY REGARDING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELFARE OF BLACKS, PERSIST AND ARE HAVING SOME EFFECT. NOT ENOUGH, IT MUST BE EMPHASIZED, TO HAVE MADE APPRECIABLE DIFFERENCE YET IN DAILY EXISTENCE OF MOST BLACKS IN SA. BUT ENOUGH TO BE SAID TO CONSTITUTE THE BEGINNINGS OF REAL CHANGE IN SA IF-- AND THIS IS A BIG, UNANSWERED IF--THE NP IS READY TO FACE REALITIES OF TIMES AND BEGIN TO SHOW A WISDOM ITS PAROCHIALY-MINDED WHITE SUPREMACISTS HAVE SADLY LACKED FOR SO LONG. IN THIS REGARD, NP'S ELECTION CAMPAIGN RHETORIC, WHICH HARDLY
E E E E E E E

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL REPRESSION, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, GOVERNMENT REFORM, POLITICAL FREEDOM, NATIONAL ELECTIONS, MINORITIES, ELECTION FORECASTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: rowelle0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974CAPET00087
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740256/aaaacadq.tel
Line Count: 162
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: CAPE TOWN 0080 (NOTAL)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: rowelle0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 18 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 APR 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <27-Sep-2002 by rowelle0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GENERAL ELECTION SET FOR APRIL: BACKGROUND AND COMMENT
TAGS: PINT, SF, NP, UP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005